

Press Release

Ghazipur Residents demand Health Advisory due to severe air quality

Ghazipur vicinity records highest average AQI in the city

How long do they have to wait for the official Health Advisory, ask residents

Delhi, Feb 5, 2017: Centre for Environment and Energy Development (CEED) organised a community dialogue followed by a photo opportunity with the residents of Ghazipur, Delhi (1). The event marked a silent protest to highlight the problems faced by the residents living around the Ghazipur landfill site because of the deteriorating air quality in the area due to open burning of waste. The residents urged the Health Minister of Delhi, Satyendra Jain to take immediate action, and unanimously agreed to sign the banner that read “*Zehrili hawaa, aur kab tak?*”

The impact of open burning of waste at landfill site of Ghazipur can easily be understood from the fact that the average Air Quality Index (AQI) of the nearest monitoring station at Anand Vihar is highest among all air quality monitoring stations in Delhi installed by CPCB/ DPCC (2)

CEED along with hundreds of school children of Delhi collected over 100,000 signatures under the #HelpDelhiBreathe campaign to request the Government of NCT of Delhi for a health advisory in each of the wards of the city pertaining to inform them about the respective air quality on a daily basis. In August, 2016, Honourable Health Minister of Delhi, Mr. Satyendra Jain, while meeting young volunteers from various schools along with CEED representatives, assured to take action on above mentioned demand (3). However, winter season is almost over and the city has suffered from some of the pollution days in the months of November and December, but the action on health advisory remains in limbo.

Mr. Dimpay Suneja, Programme Officer at CEED elaborated that “The landfills are in itself a hazardous site for the people living nearby. Due to the regular burning of waste at the site, toxic gases and PM_{2.5} are significantly released in the ambient air, making it extremely hazardous for the health of the people exposed to it.” Mr. Suneja further added that “While several actions need to be taken to cease the pollution and the exposure to this toxic air, the first step towards this should be to inform the residents of the preventive measures to mitigate health risks. Issuance of health advisory is therefore imperative not just in Ghazipur, but all across the city.”

Mr. Kasim, a resident of Ghazipur present at the event said that “Living amidst smoke, dust and pollution has become normal for us, but I am scared for our children’s health. Children of this locality are perpetually sick. We do not have ways and means to afford medical treatment, but nobody pays heed to our woes. Clean air is our basic right, and we are devoid of even that. It is high time that the Government must come to our rescue.”

Note to Editor

1. Ghazipur landfill receives approx 2200 Metric Ton of waste everyday which is highest among the 3 landfill sites in Delhi.
<http://delhi.gov.in/wps/wcm/connect/7701e3004c7b7a5a84aa94b05f83afbf/Status+of+landfill+Site-1.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&mod=942394189>

2. Real-time monitoring data
<http://www.cpcb.gov.in/CAAQM/frmUserAvgReportCriteria.aspx>
3. URL for the video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RSHbHRLpy64>

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